

# 11/9 storm recovery update

From: Captiva Community Panel <captivacommunitypanel@gmail.com>

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- Did you miss Tuesday's Community Panel meeting? It's now online at: <https://youtu.be/byNjXgwefzo>

## **'Boil water' notice ends for islands**

### **FROM ISLAND WATER ASSOCIATION:**

To: All residents of sanibel and captiva islands, with an exception noted below, the September 27, 2022 "precautionary boil water notice" is hereby rescinded following the thorough flushing of the distribution system and the satisfactory completion of the bacteriological survey showing that the water is safe to drink.

Until further notice, water services within the Caloosa Shores Association remains under a boil water notice due to low pressure delivery to that area.

If you have any questions, please call the Island Water Association, Inc. at (239) 472-1502.

## **CEPD apportionment letter**

If you have not received your apportionment notification from CEPD, you can email District Executive Director Daniel Munt at [dmunt@mycepd.com](mailto:dmunt@mycepd.com) to receive a digital version.

## **Property tax bill deadline extended**

### **FROM THE LEE COUNTY TAX COLLECTOR:**

Typically, Lee County property owners receive property tax bills the last week of October. However, because of Hurricane Ian, this year's tax roll will instead open in early November for collection of payments, with tax bills being mailed later in the month.

The 4% discount usually offered during the month of November will be extended into January due to the delayed mailing, with a firm date set once the bills have been mailed.

Once the tax roll is open for collection, customers will be able to access and print their bills online or have them emailed, by visiting [LEETC.com](http://LEETC.com), clicking "Online Service Center," then "Property Tax" and entering a name, address, or account number.

On Oct. 20, 2022, Governor Ron DeSantis signed Executive Order 22-242 to extend property tax payment deadlines for those whose homes were destroyed or rendered uninhabitable by the Hurricane. He is working with Legislators to call a Special Session before the end of the year to address property tax obligations.

If your property was destroyed or rendered uninhabitable, please contact the Lee County Property Appraiser's office at 239-533-6100 or visit their website.

## **Sanibel Causeway update**

The Sanibel Causeway will be open daily to Sanibel and Captiva residents and private contractors who possess a Valid 2021 or 2022 Sanibel Re-Entry Pass that is prominently displayed or, to those residents who have a valid Florida Driver's License with a Sanibel or Captiva address ready to present when approaching the causeway checkpoint.

Anyone attempting to gain access to Sanibel or Captiva without a re-entry pass or a valid driver's license with a Sanibel or Captiva address will be turned away at the checkpoint.

The City will evaluate its progress with debris collection weekly. Should it be

necessary to limit access to the islands to expedite debris cleanup in the future, the City will issue an updated news release.

The 9 pm to 6 am curfew remains in place for both islands.

Beginning Tuesday, Nov. 8, the City of Sanibel moved the Hurricane Reentry Pass and Business Tax Receipt (BTR) program to the Title Group of Fort Myers Ltd. office located inside the ReMax Building at 7910 Summerlin Lakes Drive, Fort Myers, FL 33907.

Hurricane Passes and BTR's will NO LONGER be issued at the Crowne Plaza Hotel location beginning Tuesday, Nov. 8.

Hurricane Passes and BTR's are issued Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., with the exception of Tuesday when they will be issued beginning at 9 a.m. at the new location. The office will be closed daily from noon to 1 p.m.

As a reminder, in observance of Veteran's Day, the City of Sanibel will be closed Friday, Nov. 11, with the exception of public safety operations on island.

## **Wildlife and refuge update**

**FROM CARRIE SCHUMAN:**

**CROW updates:**

- We are so fortunate that our buildings on the island are still standing and that all the staff and animals were safe
- Days after the storm, we had patients in hotel rooms or at a staff's house. The patient care never stopped.
- Our staff has been able to go out to the island to clean what we can and get supplies for patients. We are also in contact with electricians and contractors to get everything back up and running.
- In the meantime, we have temporarily relocated to North Fort Myers. The Animal Refuge Center (ARC) has graciously allowed us to use some of their old buildings on their campus. We have set up an ICU area as well as a rehabilitation area to continue patient care.
- Before ARC was set up, we did triage at Blue Pearl and we sent our stable patients to the Conservancy in Naples. Other patients have been transferred to different wildlife facilities throughout Florida.
- We are taking in patients again and it has been amazing the support we have received from our community and people all over the world! A "thank

you” isn’t enough.

- If anyone is interested in volunteering please email our volunteer coordinator, Pam Stoike, at [volunteers@crowclinic.org](mailto:volunteers@crowclinic.org)
- As always, if you find an injured animal, give us a call first!

### **Ding Darling updates:**

- All employees accounted for
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Response:
  - They had multiple teams through from the Service after the hurricane. They sent a special operations response team – USFW law enforcement officers to do initial inspections
  - An incident management team – Service employees that specialize in heavy equipment operation, law enforcement, and incident management. This team helped with the emergency response around Lee County, with clearing roadways in Sanibel, and with responding to Reserve staff needs
- They suggest a thorough biological assessment is needed to understand the full extent of the impact, and they have plans for one but it will take time
- Refuge is closed until further notice, and will coordinate with the City on re-opening.
- Every refuge structure sustained some damage
- The refuge is not accepting volunteers at this time. This includes both local volunteers and Recreational Vehicle (RV) Volunteers. The refuge has an active Friends group called the “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society that may be looking for volunteer assistance in support of the refuge:  
[www.dingdarlingsociety.org](http://www.dingdarlingsociety.org)
- Birgie Miller, the Executive Director for the Ding Darling Wildlife Society mentioned that she is happy to provide future updates and join a future meeting.

### **SCCF updates:**

- SCCF contributed resources right after Ian for search and rescue and other immediate needs.
- We’ve been continuing to do some of our scientific and conservation work as we can. For instance, our marine lab director Eric Milbrandt was able to join a research cruise with folks from FGCU to start doing some water quality work right after the hurricane including monitoring for red tide.

- Our coastal wildlife team was aware of 17 sea turtle nests right before the storm. Since then, our team was only able to find one nest that is not expected to produce successful hatchlings. However, we were at the very tail end of nesting season. Almost 36,000 hatchlings had emerged from nests during the season before Ian came through.
- A lot of the birds seem to be doing well. Some of our banded birds including plovers have been resighted in the surrounding area. All our species of turtle, 11 in total, have been spotted. The concern some of our wildlife right now in the interior parts of the island is supply of freshwater. The storm surge introduced salt water into a lot of places that were traditionally fresh in nature.
- We have a citizen science effort right now where we're asking folks to send in details about wildlife sightings. Wildlife sighting info: Report sightings to the SCCF Post-Ian Wildlife Sightings form at <https://forms.gle/Pu9Ci3ZREwLQnLqu8>.
- In terms of facilities and people, we were certainly impacted. All our staff are safe, but about a third had significant damage to their housing and some have had to find other places to live. A couple of our facilities made it through unscathed, others sustained significant damage. That includes our intern housing (one of the buildings collapsed), our visiting science cottage, the Bailey Homestead, and the Sanibel Sea School. In some instances, the structures are okay but much of the equipment inside was a loss. We've primarily pivoted at the moment to working on our facilities but also helping folks in the community by doing things removing appliances and bringing them to the curb, helping clean up yards, etc.
- Right now, we're still more in what you would call "response" mode, and I think we foresee needing extra hands once we're more solidly on the "recovery" path. So we'll work on a plan to incorporate outside volunteers in a thoughtful and coordinated way and will reach out with more information when ready. Until then, Kealy McNeal and Carrie Schuman would be the best points of contact -- [cschuman@sccf.org](mailto:cschuman@sccf.org) and [kmcneal@sccf.org](mailto:kmcneal@sccf.org).
- Also, we were able to identify some people on Sanibel that were really in need of a few hours of help from our staff but so far our CEO, James Evans, hadn't heard of any particular cases on Captiva. If you or anyone you know that is particularly in need and we can help, please reach out.
- We will keep sharing updates through our e-news, and on our website and social media

## **Tropical Storm Nicole update**

**FROM LEE COUNTY:**

Lee County officials Tuesday provided an update on Tropical Storm Nicole.

Here is an updated recap:

**Anticipated impacts:**

- The Lee County Emergency Operations Center is activated from Hurricane Ian. The county remains under a State of Local Emergency.
- Based on the latest forecasts, it's anticipated that Nicole will be a Category 1 hurricane when it makes landfall on the east coast of Florida sometime Wednesday or Thursday.
- 2 to 4 inches of rain with localized flooding is expected in Lee County.
- No widespread power outages currently are anticipated.

**Sheltering:**

- The county is cognizant that many residents are living in damaged homes because of Hurricane Ian or may be staying in RVs or tents on their property. The following shelter options will be available beginning at 7 a.m. Wednesday, and both are pet-friendly:
  - North Fort Myers Recreation Center, 2000 North Recreation Park Way, North Fort Myers, FL 33903.
  - Estero Recreation Center, 9200 Corkscrew Palms Blvd., Estero, FL 33928.
- Remember, these shelters are options, particularly for island residents who were previously impacted. No evacuation orders are in place at this time. These shelters are to boost safety and comfort for residents whose homes were damaged by Hurricane Ian.
- For those who need help getting to shelters, the county will activate the Emergency Transportation Plan, which uses LeeTran. People can go to any of the following designated LeeTran transfer locations beginning at 7 a.m. Wednesday for a ride to a shelter. The service is free:
  - Coconut Point Mall
  - Constitution Boulevard and U.S. 41
  - Fort Myers Beach Park & Ride
  - Sanibel Tanger Outlets
  - Edison Mall
  - Rosa Parks Transportation Center
  - Publix- Homestead Road, Lehigh Acres
  - Publix- Cape Coral North
  - Cape Coral Transfer Center
  - Merchants Crossing
- If additional information is needed, call United Way's Storm Hotline at 211 for help. Or call the LeeTran Customer Service at 239-533- 8726 or LeeTran

Passport Services at 239-533-0300.

**Blue Roof Program:**

- The county's state and federal partners have spoken about the resiliency of Blue Roofs. As an example, 88% of the Blue Roofs that were installed after Hurricane Laura withstood winds from Hurricane Delta (Category 1) in Louisiana in 2020.

**Disaster Recovery Centers:**

- In an abundance of caution, the Disaster Recovery Centers in Lee County will close while Nicole passes.
- DRCs at Fort Myers Beach and Pine Island closed effective Tuesday. The DRCs on Sanibel, Cape Coral and Lakes Regional Library will close Wednesday. All will be closed Thursday and Friday.
- Reopening decisions will be announced on the weekend.

**Debris:**

- Residents should monitor local meteorologists and the National Hurricane Center and pay close attention to the earliest arrival time for potential tropical-storm force gusts.
- Garbage and recycling collections will continue as regularly scheduled until tropical storm force winds are sustained.
- If storm debris is already cleared:
  - o Remove anything outside your home that could become a projectile during a storm including your garbage cans, lids and recycle carts and store them inside.
- The county recognizes that residents have concerns about Hurricane Ian debris piles. For now, know that the county is working rapidly to continue debris collection today and this week.
- The county is coordinating with its debris hauler and will make a decision to temporarily halt collections at an appropriate time if necessary.
- If there is debris in front of a home: Residents can take photographs of debris at their curbside prior to Nicole's arrival and again after the storm passes. This can assist the debris hauler and Solid Waste, if needed, with FEMA reimbursement.

**Additional operations:**

- No decisions have been made about any county office closures. The county will provide updates online and through social media as well as local media outlets.
- Lee County does not literally "close" bridges during tropical storms or hurricanes with barricades, cones, gates or signs because they can easily blow away, becoming ineffective and hazardous. Lee Department of Transportation strongly advises motorists to stay off bridges – and the roads leading to them—

when tropical-storm force winds are sustained.

Motorists may encounter law enforcement officers during weather events around and near bridges. Follow the directions given.

## Debris cleanup program for private and commercial property offered by state

Island residents can now apply for debris removal on private and commercial property through the Hurricane Ian Debris Cleanup Program managed by the Florida Division of Emergency Management. This debris removal service includes displaced and abandoned vehicles, vessels, and other titled property from qualifying private and commercial properties, as well as waterways throughout Lee County. More information and the application may be accessed at this website: <https://iandebriscleanup.com/>

Submit an application if you (1) own a property in Lee County and would like to request the removal of the debris on that property or (2) if you lost a vehicle, vessel, or other titled property due to Hurricane Ian and would like to report the vehicle, vessel or other titled property missing.

For assistance with the application or for general questions, please call the FDEM Hurricane Ian Debris Cleanup Hotline at [\(850\) 961-2002](tel:(850)961-2002) or send an email message to [IanDebrisCleanup@em.myflorida.com](mailto:IanDebrisCleanup@em.myflorida.com).

Please note, completing an application does not guarantee eligibility for debris removal or the return of your displaced title property.



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